

5 What is claimed is:

1. A security system for monitoring the interior of an enclosed container said system comprising:

a sensing unit including a housing having first and second ends carried by said container, said first end being disposed within said container, and said second end

10 being disposed outside said container;

a sensor carried in said first end for monitoring conditions within said container and signaling changes in said conditions;

a central processing unit in said housing in communication with said sensor said central processing unit receiving information monitored by said sensor; and

15 comparing said information against a set of established parameters;

an external status indicator carried by second end of said housing for signaling current security status of the container as monitored by said sensor;

said indicator having a first condition signaling a secured status within said container and a second condition signaling a breach of said parameters has been

20 detected by said sensor; and

a remote access device operatively associated with said sensor for deactivating and reactivating said sensor;

whereby said security system provides a signal on said exterior of the container whether the conditions within the container remain within said tolerances or  
25 have moved into a condition outside said tolerances indicating tampering or unauthorized access into said container.

5           2.     The security system of claim 1 wherein said processing unit includes a computer readable medium for defining the type change within said container and the date and time of said change.

          3.     The security system of claim 2 wherein said change may constitute a change in light conditions, temperature, motion, sound, radiation and any combination  
10 thereof.

          4.     The security system of claim 1 wherein said remote access device is operative to receive, display and print condition information generated by said processing unit.

          5.     The security system of claim 1 wherein said remote accessing device  
15 includes a global positioning system, whereby said remote access device is operative to generate location at the time of breach.

          6.     The security system of claim 1 wherein said external status indicator includes indicator lights.

          7.     The security system of claim 1 wherein said housing includes a power  
20 source for operating said sensing unit.

          8.     The security system of claim 1 wherein said housing is removably mounted in an end wall or door of said container.

          9.     The security system of claim 1 wherein said container is portable by land and sea transport.

25           10.    The security system of claim 1 wherein said second end includes an infrared port for receiving and transmitting information.

5           11.    A sensor device for monitoring conditions within an interior of an enclosed container, said sensor device being operative to detect changes in conditions within said container caused by tampering or unauthorized access to the container, said sensor device comprising:

                  a sensor dome including a sensor positioned within said container for  
10   monitoring conditions within said container;

                  an external status indicator positioned on an exterior of said container in communication with said sensor, said status indicator signaling a current security status within said container based on signal output of said sensor;

                  said indicator having a first condition signaling a secured status and a  
15   second condition signaling a breached status;

                  whereby said external status indicator provides a visual signal to an inspector on the exterior of the container indicating an unbreached and a breached container.

                  12.   The sensor device of claim 11 including a central processing unit  
20   associated with said sensor and status indicator, said processing unit being operative to monitor signals sent by said sensor, comparing said signals against a norm and sending signals to said status indicator indicating breach and no breach of said container interior.

                  13.   The sensor device of claim 12 wherein said status indicator includes a  
25   port communicating with a wireless device, said port sending said breach and no breach signals to said wireless device.

5           14.    The sensor device of claim 12 wherein said breach signal includes data indicating type of breach and time of breach.

          15.    The sensor device of claim 12 wherein said breach signal includes data indicating location of said container at the time of said breach.

          16.    The sensor device of claim 13 wherein said wireless device comprises  
10 one of a palm pilot, a laptop and a desk top.

          17.    A method of monitoring a shipping container comprising:

                  providing an exterior monitor and securing said exterior monitor with an outside surface of said container;

                  providing an interior monitor and positioning said interior monitor within  
15 said container;

                  causing said interior monitor to sense conditions within said container and to send signals in response to said conditions between secure condition and breached condition;

                  providing a central processing unit in communication with said interior and  
20 exterior monitors which receives secured condition and breached condition signals from said interior monitor indicating conditions within said container;

                  providing said exterior monitor with a plurality of signaling elements and activating selected of said elements in response to signals from said central processing unit; wherein,

25           when said container is in a secured condition a first signal is continuously provided indicating said container is in said secured condition and when said

5 container is in a breached condition a second signal is continuously sent  
indicating said container is in said breached condition.

18. The method of claim 17 including providing that said interior monitor  
sense changes at least one of light conditions, temperature, sound and radiation.

19. The method of claim 17 including providing independent visual indicators  
10 for said exterior monitor.

20. The method of claim 17 including providing satellite communication and  
monitoring the location of said container.

21. The method of claim 17 including providing a remote access device in  
communication with said exterior monitor which functions to record at least one of date,  
15 time and location of a breach of said container.

22. The method of claim 17 including providing a remote access device in  
communication with said exterior monitor and said central processing unit which  
functions to activate, deactivate and re-set said central processing unit.

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